Peoples Temple Guyana
DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
GOG Relationship
REVIEWED BY _____ DATE _____
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Relations between the Peoples Temple and the GOG, particularly with the Ministries of Economic and National Development, were good. The Peoples Temple decision to establish an agricultural community in North West Guyana dovetailed with the GOG's expressed goal to open the interior of Guyana for agricultural development. The Guyanese were impressed with the dedication and discipline displayed by the Peoples Temple in carving an agricultural settlement out of the jungle within a short period. This relationship deepened as the Temple invested heavily in building the community as a model of cooperative socialism.

Sometime in 1975 the Temple established a liaison group to operate in Georgetown to perform administrative and liaison tasks with the Government. In this connection, Temple members were very active in publicizing the activities of the organization and in praising Jones. This included a weekly radio program on the Government broadcast station that provided news of Temple activities in Jonestown to the Guyanese public. This group was responsible for local procurement, clearing

incoming shipments from the U.S. destined for the community, meeting newly-arrived Temple members, and screening requests from outside individuals who wished to visit the community. These representatives also were very active in providing Guyanese government officials with information which was designed to convince the Government of Guyana that the Peoples Temple was the victim of a conspiracy organized by right wing reactionary, racist groups in the United States, possibly involving some U.S. government agencies.

Political realities in Guyana in 1976 and early 1977 were such that Jones allegations of conspiracy against his organization found a receptive audience among certain Guyanese officials who themselves were inclined to believe that the U.S. was trying to destabilize their country. However, in spite of the original receptivity to the Peoples Temple's activities in Guyana the Guyanese Government officials in April 1977 indicated some concern because of the increasing number of Americans, many of whom were elderly, coming to Jonestown.

There is an FBI report based on information from a former Peoples Temple member that the Peoples Temple had been able to suborn certain officials of the Guyanese Government by means of money and sex. There is no evidence supporting this allegation. (The report also alleged that an official of the U.S. Embassy had been suborned. SY has investigated this report and given a clean bill of health.)

Soon after that (June 1977), Guyanese police officials began to monitor Temple activities in Jonestown and Georgetown. As part of this monitoring the Government required that all Temple shipments arriving at the agricultural community by boat must stop at the Port of Mabaruma for police inspection before continuing on to Jonestown. According to Guyanese officials, the results of this monitoring failed to reveal any evidence of shipment of illegal items or any other illegal activity.